WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method of estimating purchases made by customers of a supplier of interest from other suppliers, wherein the method is performed on a computer, and wherein the method comprises the following steps:

a) reading panelist data regarding purchases made by panelists from the supplier of interest and from the other suppliers, wherein the panelists are a subset of the customers;

b) determining a relationship between the purchases made by the panelists from the supplier of interest and the purchases made by the panelists from the other suppliers;

c) reading customer data regarding purchases made by the customers from the supplier of interest; and,

d) based upon the customer data and the relationship, estimating the purchases made by the customers from the other suppliers.

2. The method of claim 1 wherein step a) comprises the step of aggregating the panelist data according to categories, and wherein step (c) comprises the step of aggregating the customer data according to categories.

3. The method of claim 2 wherein the aggregated data includes a number of dollars that each panelist spent with the supplier of interest by category and a number of dollars that each panelist spent with the other suppliers by category.

4. The method of claim 3 wherein the aggregated data includes share for the supplier of interest and share for the other suppliers by category.

5. The method of claim 2 comprising the step of performing an unrotated principal components factor analysis on at least one of the aggregated panelist data and the aggregated customer data.

6. The method of claim 5 comprising the step of determining predictor variables based upon on at least one of the aggregated panelist data and the aggregated customer data.

7. The method of claim 6 wherein the predictor variables include the following: factors F_1 through F_i resulting from the performing step; a total number of trips in which dollars were spent in a category; and, a total number of dollars spent in a category.

8. The method of claim 7 wherein the predictor variables also include the following: the squares of the factors F_1 through F_i; interdependent factors based upon products of the factors F_1 through F_i; a square of the total number of trips; and, a square of the total number of dollars.

9. The method of claim 6 wherein the predictor variables include factors F_1 through F_i resulting from the performing step.

10. The method of claim 9 wherein the predictor variables also include the squares of the factors F_1 through F_i.

11. The method of claim 9 wherein the predictor variables also include interdependent factors based upon products of the factors F_1 through F_i.

12. The method of claim 6 wherein the predictor variables include a total number of trips in which dollars were spent in a category.

13. The method of claim 12 wherein the predictor variables also include a square of the total number of trips.

14. The method of claim 6 wherein the predictor variables include a total number of dollars spent in a category.

15. The method of claim 14 wherein the predictor variables also include a square of the total number of dollars.

16. The method of claim 6 comprising the step of determining criterion variables based upon at least one of the aggregated panelist data and the aggregated customer data.

17. The method of claim 16 wherein the step of determining criterion variables comprises the step of dividing the panelists into buckets and of determining the criterion variables as the number of panelists in each bucket.

18. The method of claim 16 comprising the steps of executing a routine in order to generate a set of scoring rules, and creating new predictor variables based upon the scoring rules.

19. The method of claim 18 wherein the step of creating new predictor variables based upon the scoring rules comprises the steps of inputting the panelist data and the customer data to the scoring rules by product category

and by bucket of panelist IDs and summing an output of the scoring rules by product category and by bucket.

20. The method of claim 18 comprising the step of performing a linear regression based upon the new predictor variables and the criterion variables in order to generate the relationship, wherein the relationship is a linear relationship.

21. The method of claim 20 wherein step d) comprises the step of applying the customer data to the linear relationship.

22. The method of claim 1 comprising the step of performing an unrotated principal components factor analysis on at least one of the panelist data and the customer data.

23. The method of claim 22 comprising the step of determining predictor variables based upon on at least one of the panelist data and the customer data.

24. The method of claim 23 comprising the step of determining criterion variables based upon on at least one of the panelist data and the customer data.

25. The method of claim 24 comprising the step of performing a linear regression based upon the predictor variables and the criterion variables in order to generate the relationship, wherein the relationship is a linear relationship.

26. The method of claim 25 wherein step d) comprises the step of applying the customer data to the linear relationship in order to estimate the purchases made by the customers from the other suppliers.

27. The method of claim 1 comprising the step of performing an unrotated principal components factor analysis on the customer data.

28. The method of claim 27 comprising the step of performing a linear regression based upon the panelist data in order to generate the relationship, wherein the relationship is a linear relationship.

29. The method of claim 28 wherein step d) comprises the step of applying the customer data to the linear relationship.

30. A method of estimating purchases made by customers of a supplier of interest from other suppliers, wherein the method is performed on a computer, and wherein the method comprises the following steps:

a) reading customer data regarding purchases made by the customers from the supplier of interest;

b) reading panelist data regarding purchases made by panelists from the supplier of interest and from the other suppliers, wherein the panelists are a subset of the customers; and,

c) based upon the customer data and the panelist data, estimating purchases made by the customers from the other suppliers.

31. The method of claim 30 wherein step c) comprises the step of aggregating the customer data and the panelist data according to categories.

32. The method of claim 31 wherein step c) comprises the step of performing an unrotated principal components factor analysis on at least a portion of the aggregated data.

33. The method of claim 32 wherein step c) comprises the step of determining predictor variables based upon the performing step and upon at least a portion of the aggregated data.

34. The method of claim 33 wherein step c) comprises the step of performing a linear regression on the predictor variables in order to generate a linear equation for each category.

35. The method of claim 34 wherein step c) comprises the step of estimating the purchases made by the customers from the other suppliers in each category by plugging the customer data into the linear equation for each category.

36. The method of claim 30 wherein step c) comprises the step of performing an unrotated principal components factor analysis based upon at least one of the panelist data and the customer data.

37. The method of claim 36 wherein step c) comprises the step of creating a linear equation based upon results from the unrotated principal components factor analysis.

38. The method of claim 37 wherein step c) comprises the step of estimating the purchases made by the customers from the other suppliers by plugging the customer data into the linear equation.

39. A method of estimating purchases made by customers of a supplier of interest, wherein the method is performed on a computer, and wherein the method comprises the following steps:

a) determining a linear relationship between purchases made by panelists from the supplier of interest and purchases made by the panelists from the other suppliers; and,

b) estimating purchases by the customers from the other suppliers based upon the linear relationship.

40. The method of claim 39 wherein step b) comprises the step of estimating purchases from the other suppliers made by the customers of the supplier of interest based upon the linear relationship and purchases made by the customers from the supplier of interest.

41. The method of claim 39 wherein the panelists are a subset of the customers.

42. The method of claim 41 wherein step b) comprises the step of estimating purchases from the other suppliers made by the customers of the supplier of interest based upon the linear relationship and purchases made by the customers from the supplier of interest.

43. A system for estimating purchases made by customers of a supplier of interest comprising:

analyzing means for analyzing purchases made by the customers from the supplier of interest and purchases made by panelists from both the supplier of interest and other suppliers, wherein the panelists are a subset of the customers of the supplier of interest; and,

estimating means for estimating purchases by the customers from the other suppliers based upon the analyzed purchases.

44. The method of claim 43 wherein the analyzing means comprises means for performing an unrotated principal components factor analysis based upon purchase data.

45. The method of claim 44 wherein the analyzing means comprises means for determining a linear relationship based upon results from the unrotated principal components factor analysis.

46. The method of claim 45 wherein the linear relationship relates purchasers made by the panelists from the supplier of interest to purchases made by the panelists from the other suppliers.

47. The method of claim 45 wherein the estimating means estimates the purchases by the customers from the other suppliers based upon the purchases by the customers from the supplier of interest and upon the linear relationship.

48. The method of claim 43 wherein the analyzing means comprises means for determining a linear relationship between purchasers made by the panelists from the supplier of interest and purchases made by the panelists from the other suppliers.

49. The method of claim 48 wherein the estimating means estimates the purchases by the customers from the other suppliers by plugging the purchases by the customers from the supplier of interest into upon the linear relationship.